

Message Text

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S E C R E T JOHANNESBURG 0146

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FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY SCHAUFELE FROM EDMONDSON

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR, RH
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: RICHARD'S MEETING WITH MUZOREWA, JAN 2
, 1977

REF: JOHANNESBURG 0139

1. IVOR RICHARD SAW BISHOP MUZOROWA IN SALISBURY AGAIN AFTER HIS MEETING WITH IAN SMITH (REFTEL). HE SAID THE BISHOP WAS DISAPPOINTED AND BITTER AT SMITH'S REJECTION OF THE BRITISH PROPOSALS. NEITHER RICHARD, DENNIS GRENNAN, NOR PHILIP MANSFIELD THOUGHT THERE WAS ANY CHANCE THAT MUZOREWA WOULD "DO A DEAL" WITH SMITH ON AN INTERNAL OPTION DESPITE MUZOREWA'S UNHAPPINESS AT THE FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS' ENDORSEMENT OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. MUZOREWA WAS ESPECIALLY BITTER AT THE EXECUTIONS OF ANC GUERRILLAS BY THE SMITH REGIME AND CLAIMED THAT THE NUMBER RECENTLY EXECUTED WAS 21, NOT 10 AS ANNOUNCED TO THE PRESS. THERE WAS NEARLY ONE A WEEK, HE SAID, NOTING THAT SOME OF THE FAMILIES HAD GONE TO THE PRISONS TO ASK ABOUT THEIR RELATIVES' WELFARE ONLY TO BE HANDED THEIR DECEASED RELATIVES' CLOTHING.

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2. RICHARD AND HIS COLLEAGUES BELIEVE THAT SMITH CONTINUES TO DECEIVE HIMSELF THAT HE CAN WIN MUZOREWA OVER TO HIS INTERNAL OPTION. GRENNAN NOTED THAT SMITH'S JANUARY 24 STATEMENT, WITHOUT NAMING MUZOREWA DIRECTLY, SPOKE OF THE AFRICAN LEADER WHO COMMANDS THE GREATEST MEASURE OF SUPPORT AMONG AFRICANS IN RHODESIA BUT WOULD HAVE ONLY ONE SIXTH OF THE SEATS IN THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS. GRENNAN THOUGHT

SMITH MIGHT COME TO REGRET THIS ADMISSION OF MUZOREWA'S SUPPORT, IF, AS SEEMED LIKELY, MUZOREWA AND HIS FOLLOWERS REFUSED TO ACCEPT AN INTERNAL OPTION.

3. THE BRITISH SAID, ON THE BASIS OF PEOPLE THEY HAD TALKED TO AND REPORTS FROM OTHERS IN RHODESIA, THAT MUZOREWA SEEMS TO HAVE GAINED STRENGTH FROM THE FRONTLINE STATES' RECOGNITION OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. THEY BELIEVE QUITE A FEW RHODESIAN AFRICANS, EVEN NKOMO SUPPORTERS, RESENT BEING TOLD BY OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES WHICH PARTY THEY SHOULD SUPPORT. AMONG OTHER EVIDENCE, MANSFIELD NOTED THAT MUZOREWA WENT TO GIVE A "CHURCH TALK" TO A GATHERING IN FORT VICTORIA, NORMALLY AN NKOMO STRONGHOLD, AND WAS APPARENTLY WELL RECEIVED. (HIS "CHURCH TALK" WAS PRESUMABLY QUITE POLITICAL.)

4. COMMENT: FROM COMMENTS MADE BY SMITH AND OTHERS IT APPEARS THAT HE MAY INDEED BE PLANNING TO INSTITUTE, OR AT LEAST WORK TOWARD, AN INTERNAL OPTION BASED ON THE APPOINTED TRIBAL CHIEFS AND MUZOREWA'S ANC IF HE CAN WIN THE LATTER OVER. SMITH PROBABLY BELIEVES THAT THE BASIC CONSERVATISM OF SOME OF MUZOREWA'S MIDDLE-CLASS AFRICAN SUPPORTERS, ESPECIALLY THEIR FEAR OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLENCE AND DOMINATION BY MOZAMBIQUE-TYPE AFRICAN RADICALISM, WILL CAUSE THEM TO INFLUENCE MUZOREWA TO ENTER INTO SOME SORT OF ARRANGEMENT WITH HIM. SMITH MAY HOPE THAT HIS CHANCES OF DOING THIS CAN BE IMPROVED BY ELIMINATING SOME OF THE HARSHER ASPECTS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN RHODESIA, OR AT LEAST BY SHOWING SOME EFFORT TO DO SO.

IN A MORE FUNDAMENTAL SENSE, HOWEVER, HE MAY ALSO ENTERTAIN

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THE IDEA OF WINNING MUZOREWA/ANC PARTICIPATION THROUGH SOME TYPE OF REFERENDUM OR ELECTORAL PROCESS THAT WOULD BE ATTRACTIVE TO MANY WESTERNERS. THIS IN TURN, HE MAY REASON, WOULD MAKE IT HARDER FOR THE US AND OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES TO CRITICIZE THE RESULTS. AS A NET RESULT, HE MAY BELIEVE THAT BY STICKING TO THE "KISSINGER PROPOSALS" (FOR WHICH HE MAY BELIEVE THERE IS STILL POTENTIAL USG SUPPORT) AND INSTITUTING A REFERENDUM OR ELECTIONS, HE CAN WIN AMERICAN AND WESTERN SUPPORT AGAINST ANY OUTSIDE

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GUERRILLA INCURSIONS, ESPECIALLY IF THE LATTER ARE COMMUNIST SUPPORTED. WHILE THE FOREGOING SCENARIO IS SPECULATIVE, IT IS A LOGICAL CONSTRUCT AND MIGHT EVEN WORK FOR A WHILE IF SMITH COULD WIN ENOUGH INTERNAL AFRICAN SUPPORT. ON THE OTHER HAND, MUZOREWA AND MANY OF HIS FOLLOWERS ARE STRONGLY AWARE OF THE HAZARDS OF DEALING WITH OR BECOMING PART OF A PUPPET REGIME. MUZOREWA APPEARS UNLIKELY TO SELL OUT FOR POWER OR POSITION ALONE, THOUGH HE COULD CONCEIVABLY ACT OUT OF CONVICTION THAT HE IS

LEADING HIS PEOPLE AWAY FROM DESTRUCTION TO
SALVATION. ON BALANCE, HOWEVER, NOT WANTING TO BE A PUPPET
AND KNOWING THAT GUERILLA WAR AND TRIBAL CONFLICT MIGHT ONLY
BE LIGHTENED, MUZOROWA SEEMS UNLIKELY TO "DO A DEAG." TO
PUT IT CONVERSELY, IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE SMITH MAKING
ENOUGH CONCESSIONS UNILATERALLY TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR
MUZOREWA TO DEAL. IF THIS IS CORRECT, SMIHH MAY BE
CONSTRUCTING HIS INTERNAL PLAN ON FALSE ASSUMPTIONS.

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